

Regular Session, 2009

HOUSE BILL NO. 772

BY REPRESENTATIVE WILLMOTT

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: Makes changes to the Healthcare Professional Development Program

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 40:1300.1, 1300.2(2) and (4), 1300.3(A), 1300.4(B) and (C), and
3 1300.5(A) and (B) and to enact R.S. 40:1300.2(5) and 1300.5(C) through (H),
4 relative to the Health Professional Development Program; to provide for scholarships
5 to medical or dental students who are from rural or urban underserved areas; to
6 restrict scholarship funds to those students who are willing to practice in rural or
7 urban underserved areas; to provide for definitions; to create the Scholarship Awards
8 Committee; and to provide for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 40:1300.1, 1300.2(2) and (4), 1300.3(A), 1300.4(B) and (C), and
11 1300.5(A) and (B) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 40:1300.2(5) and 1300.5(C)
12 through (H) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

13 §1300.1. Health Professional Development Program

14 The Health Professional Development Program is hereby created in the office
15 of management and finance in the Department of Health and Hospitals. The program
16 is established to meet the ~~emergency resulting from the~~ current and projected
17 continued severe shortage of medical doctors and nurses in health ~~manpower~~
18 professional shortage areas in the state by increasing the number of primary health
19 care practitioners in shortage areas through a program for repayment of loans, a

1 program for physician retention and recruitment, and a scholarship program. The
2 Department of Health and Hospitals may participate in any federal programs that
3 provide matching funds or total funding for health professional development.

4 §1300.2. Definitions

5 * * *

6 (2) "Health ~~manpower~~ professional shortage areas" means areas so classified
7 by the United States Public Health Services as areas with a shortage of health
8 ~~manpower~~ professionals.

9 * * *

10 (4) "Reasonable related educational expenses" means the cost of education,
11 exclusive of tuition, such as fees, books, supplies, clinical travel, educational
12 equipment, and materials, which do not exceed the school's estimated standard
13 student budget for educational expenses for the participant's degree program for the
14 year or years of the participant's enrollment.

15 (5) "Secretary" means the secretary of the Department of Health and
16 Hospitals.

17 §1300.3. Retention and recruitment program

18 A. The department shall develop and administer a plan for recruitment and
19 retention of primary health care practitioners to practice in health ~~manpower~~
20 professional shortage areas or facilities.

21 * * *

22 §1300.4. Loan repayment program

23 * * *

24 B. To be eligible for the loan repayment program, an applicant must be
25 licensed and qualified as a physician or nurse to practice in Louisiana, be willing to
26 practice in a health ~~manpower~~ professional shortage area, and meet any other
27 requirements which may be established by the program.

1 C. Medical education loans shall be repaid retroactively after each term of
2 service in a health ~~manpower~~ professional shortage area for up to three years
3 depending upon the primary health care provider's length of service.

4 * * *

5 §1300.5. Scholarship program

6 A. The department shall administer a state scholarship program based on the
7 best practice evidence from other successful programs nationwide to increase the
8 number of primary care physicians serving in rural or underserved urban areas. ~~To~~
9 ~~be eligible for the scholarship program an applicant must:~~

10 (1) ~~Be accepted for enrollment, or be enrolled as a full-time student in a~~
11 ~~program offering a doctor of medicine at a professional school of the Louisiana State~~
12 ~~University Health Sciences Center, an approved program offering training as a~~
13 ~~registered nurse in a public or regionally accredited independent institution of higher~~
14 ~~education, or an approved program offering training as a licensed practical nurse at~~
15 ~~a public institution.~~

16 (2) ~~Pursue an approved course of study and maintain an acceptable level of~~
17 ~~academic standing, leading to a degree in medicine, dentistry, or other health-related~~
18 ~~specialty, as determined by the secretary.~~

19 (3) ~~Agree in writing to serve in the health manpower shortage areas, one year~~
20 ~~for each year of receiving the scholarship. Failure to serve as agreed to in writing~~
21 ~~shall result in the repayment of such scholarship and a substantial penalty as~~
22 ~~determined by the department.~~

23 B. There shall be the rural primary care scholarship and the urban
24 underserved primary care scholarship.

25 B. C. Subject to the availability of funding, the department shall provide
26 scholarships equal to the lowest base tuition of a public medical school in the state
27 and other reasonable educational expenses. ~~sufficient to provide for the graduation~~
28 ~~each year of the following:~~

1 ~~(1) Ten physicians from accredited graduate medical education training~~
2 ~~programs in the disciplines of family medicine, emergency medicine, pediatrics,~~
3 ~~medicine/pediatrics, or obstetrics/gynecology.~~

4 ~~(2) Ten registered nurses.~~

5 ~~(3) Ten licensed practical nurses.~~

6 D. There is hereby established the scholarship awards committee within the
7 Department of Health and Hospitals. The objectives of this committee shall be to
8 review applications for medical or dental school scholarships and to award
9 scholarships based upon objective criteria. The committee shall be made up of the
10 following members:

11 (1) The secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, or his designee,
12 who shall serve as the chairman of the committee.

13 (2) The chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-
14 New Orleans or his designee.

15 (3) The chancellor of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-
16 Shreveport or his designee.

17 (4) The dean of the Tulane University School of Medicine or his designee.

18 (5) The dean of the Louisiana State University School of Dentistry or his
19 designee.

20 (6) The speaker of the House of Representatives or his designee.

21 (7) The president of the Senate or his designee.

22 E. The minimum criteria that the committee shall consider for awarding a
23 scholarship is as follows:

24 (1) The student has been accepted for enrollment or is enrolled as a full-time
25 student in a program offering a doctor of medicine or dentistry at a professional
26 school in the state.

27 (2) The student is from a rural area or an underserved urban area.

1 (3) The student is admitted and continues to participate in a designated rural
2 primary care or general primary care or general dentistry track program within a state
3 medical or dental school.

4 (4) The student pursues an approved course of study and maintains an
5 acceptable level of academic standing leading to a degree in medicine or dentistry.

6 (5) The student is willing to agree in writing to serve in a rural or
7 underserved urban area one year for each year of receiving the scholarship.

8 F. Once a scholarship is awarded, the scholarship shall continue each year
9 the student is in medical or dental school, provided the student continues to meet the
10 criteria determined by the committee.

11 G. The department shall establish rules for failure to serve as agreed to in
12 writing for repayment of such scholarship and a substantial penalty.

13 H. The department may establish rules for hardship waivers as well as other
14 contractual obligations as deemed necessary to protect the state's investment and
15 further the state's workforce policy goals.

16 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
17 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
18 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
19 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
20 effective on the day following such approval.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

Willmott

HB No. 772

Abstract: Makes changes to the Health Professional Development Program. Eliminates nursing and other professionals from scholarship program. Creates a new board to administer scholarships awarded to promote primary care and dentistry in certain areas. Removes number of scholarships which must be granted by Dept. of Health and Hospitals (DHH) every year.

Present law provides for a Health Professional Development Program under DHH.

Present law defines certain terms including "health manpower shortage areas", "department", and "secretary".

Proposed law retains present law, but changes "health manpower shortage area" to "health professional shortage area" in order to be consistent with federal law.

Proposed law defines "reasonable education expenses" as non-tuition costs including fees, books, supplies, clinical travel, educational equipment, and materials, which do not exceed the school's estimated standard budget for educational expenses for the participant's degree program for the years of that participant's enrollment.

Proposed law retains present law, but narrows the program to increase the number of primary care physicians and dentists in rural or underserved urban areas.

Present law requires that students be enrolled in a doctoral program offered at the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center (LSUHSC), an approved registered nursing program at a college or university, or an approved licensed practical nursing program at any public institution.

Proposed law eliminates the scholarship program for registered and licensed practical nursing and for students enrolled in a doctoral program at LSUHSC. Retains a scholarship program for students enrolled in a medical or dentistry program at LSUHSC. Proposed law changes present law to allow students enrolled in a medical or dentistry program at a professional school in Louisiana to apply and receive a scholarship. Further requires students to come from a rural area or an underserved area and continuously participate in a rural primary care, general primary care, or dentistry track program within a Louisiana medical or dental school.

Present law requires students to pursue an approved course of study and maintain an acceptable level of academic standing leading to a degree in medicine or dentistry.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires students to agree in writing to serve in a health manpower shortage area classified by the United States Public Health Service for one year for each year of receiving the scholarship.

Proposed law repeals present law and specifies that the amount of the scholarship is equal to the lowest base tuition of a public medical school in the state and other reasonable education expenses.

Present law provides that failure of the student to serve in a health professional shortage area after graduation for an agreed upon time results in a substantial penalty. Further provides that DHH determines the amount of the penalty.

Proposed law retains present law, but further provides that DHH may, through rulemaking, waive certain scholarship requirements "for hardship" or any other contractual obligation as deemed necessary to protect the state's investments and workforce policy goals.

Present law specifies that DHH, subject to the availability of funds, provide enough scholarships for ten registered nurses, ten licensed practical nurses, and ten physicians to specialize in family medicine, emergency medicine, pediatrics, medicine/pediatrics, or obstetrics/gynecology.

Proposed law eliminates the requirement to provide a certain number of scholarships in any given year.

Proposed law establishes a scholarship awards committee within DHH to review applications for scholarships and award them accordingly. Provides that the committee is comprised of the following persons or designee: the secretary of DHH, the chancellor of LSUHSC-New Orleans, the chancellor of LSUHSC-Shreveport, the dean of the Tulane School of Medicine, the dean of the LSU School of Dentistry, the speaker of the House, and the president of the Senate.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 40:1300.1, 1300.2(2) and (4), 1300.3(A), 1300.4(B) and (C), and 1300.5(A) and (B); Adds R.S. 40:1300.2(5) and 1300.5(C)-(H))